

VZCZCXRO6392

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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9127
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: GYMNIH: CYPRUS AGREES WITH U.S. POSITIONS ON
MIDDLE EAST, DISAGREES ON SERBIA

REF: SECSTATE 93272

¶1. (SBU) Per reftel, PolOff demarched MFA European Division diplomat Nikos Panayiotou regarding issues likely to be raised at the September 5-6 Gymnich informal meeting of EU foreign ministers. Panayiotou stated the GOC supported the Middle East peace process and legitimate Palestinian Authority institutions, and highlighted the GOC's 2 million USD donation to the Palestinian police for training. With regards to the EU Security Strategy, he noted that the 2003 strategy was "relevant and valued," and advocated updating the elements that needed to be improved in lieu of revamping the whole strategy.

¶2. (SBU) On transatlantic relations, the GOC favored discussing and sharing views and focusing on meeting common threats. With regards to improving EU-NATO cooperation, the GOC was concerned it would face "specific problems from specific NATO members," in other words, Turkey. The GOC feared being excluded from discussions between the two institutions, Panayiotou continued. Although Cyprus had not taken part in the Bosnia missions for specific reasons, the government felt Turkey would try to exclude Cyprus from participating in any joint EU-NATO operation, regardless of whether it was civilian or military in orientation.

¶3. (SBU) Regarding Serbia and its opposition to Kosovo's independence, the GOC position was clear: it was "inconsistent" to tell Belgrade that it could not pursue all available international legal options available, including seeking an advisory opinion from the ICJ, when Serbia was "clearly cooperating" with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) by handing over suspected war criminals. Panayiotou re-stated that Cyprus had no intention to recognize Kosovo.

¶4. (SBU) Last, in discussing Pakistan and Afghanistan, the GOC was in "broad agreement" over the importance of stabilizing those countries. Panayiotou thought Pakistan might stabilize somewhat after its upcoming elections, allowing it to fight terrorism more effectively.
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